

**City of Chula Vista
Parks and Recreation Commission
Minutes**

Thursday – 6:30 p.m.
Public Works Operations

February 15, 2007
1800 Maxwell Road CV

Meeting called to order by Chair Rios at 6:31 p.m.

Staff Present: Buck Martin, Director of Recreation
Dave Byers, Director of Public Works Operations
Larry Eliason, Parks and Open Space Manager
Joe Gamble, Landscape Planner II
Ted Nelson, Recreation Supervisor III

Guests: Sandy Duncan, Crossroads
Jan Buddington, Jr. 664 Rue Le Blanc, CV CA 91913

1. Roll Call/Motion to Excuse

Members Present: Commissioner Salcido, Commissioner Scott (arrived at 6:40 p.m.),
Commissioner Ramos (arrived at 6:50 p.m.), Commissioner Rios,
Commissioner Cien-Mayer, Commissioner Searles

Members Absent: Commissioner Perondi

2. Approval of Minutes –

a. **January 18, 2007** – Move to March meeting.

3. Information Items

a. **Turf alternatives for multi-purpose fields** – Mr. Eliason (Parks and Open Space Manager) informed the Commission that at their January 18, 2007 Commission, it was requested that staff bring forward information regarding turf alternatives for the City's sports fields.

Mr. Eliason informed the Commission that currently, all sports fields are either seeded with a common Bermuda or a 'hybrid' Bermuda. He further added that these grass types are resilient, and can repair themselves when damaged or wear has occurred. In addition, Mr. Eliason explained that when temperatures drop below 50 degrees, Bermuda growth stops and the grass begins to discolor, and turns dormant (turn brown). This occurs until the ground temperatures rise above 50 degrees for several days. Of special note, Mr. Eliason pointed out that the brown look is noticeable this year in particular because the water was shut off earlier than usual to save money as part of the contingency reduction plan for Public Works Operations. To exacerbate the situation, there has been very little rain; and it's been unusually cold this winter, hence, all parks have gone dormant including the parks on the bayfront, which is unusual.

Mr. Eliason also stated that by using Bermuda and not overseeding with winter Rye, crews don't have to mow or water during the winter, which is a saving measure. In addition, he

added that as soon as the weather warms up, and the City begins to water the grass, it will "green up" again.

Commissioner Salcido stated that Discovery Park is a heavily used park, and additional watering is required at this park, and should continue through November instead of stopping the watering in September. He further stated that it is the responsibility of the Parks Department to maintain the fields to a safety standard where users will not hurt themselves, and maintaining fields at a proper playing condition is owed to the residents of Chula Vista.

Commissioner Searles stated that staff is doing a great job rotating fields for maintenance and resting period.

Mr. Nelson (Recreation Supervisor III) stated that soccer is a high impact sport, and that Discovery Park is heavily used for practice Monday through Friday, in addition, to games on the weekends.

Commissioner Rios asked about the size of the multi-purpose field at Discovery, and asked if the dry spots in the Discovery Park could be seeded with Bermuda and/or sodded?

Mr. Eliason (Parks and Open Space Manager) responded that Discovery Park has been sodded and has been over seeded in the past however; Rye is not the answer for sports fields.

Commissioner Cien-Mayer asked when watering is stopped and asked if it would have made a difference to stop watering at a later date. In addition, asked for clarification on the budgetary reductions that would impact preferred maintenance levels.

Mr. Eliason responded that watering was stopped in September and that it wouldn't have made a difference to stop watering later in the season.

Mr. Byers (Director of Public Works Operations) informed the Commission that City departments were given budgetary to goals to cut. Public Works' goals are \$1M. He also noted that the Department is recommending to returning to the maintenance level that was in place, prior to the staffing study done in 2000. In addition, with the budget reduction, the Department won't be able to respond when the turf is damaged. The Department is going to be very restricted in maintenance of the fields.

Commissioner Searles understands that there are budget constraints and appreciates the programs offered by the Recreation and Parks Departments. In addition, he stated that he hopes that the budget process and constraints placed on these departments does not undermine the beneficial programs offered by these departments.

b. Urban Parks – Power Point Presentation – Mr. Martin (Director of Recreation) introduced Mr. Joe Gamble, Landscape Planner II.

Mr. Gamble (Landscape Planner II) discussed information pertaining to Urban Parks in the context to the on going effort of the update of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The General Plan Update included the addition of a new category of parks referred to as an urban park. Staff is developing a more precise definition of an urban park for incorporation into the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Mr. Gamble also stated that the General Plan defines framework for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The General Plan defines parks into 6 categories and they include, Regional, Special Purpose, Mini Parks, Community, Neighborhood and the new Urban Park. Mr. Gamble also stated that community and neighborhood parks will continue to be the staple in regards to providing sport fields, urban parks will accommodate needs, and requires less acreage.

Mr. Gamble addressed the relative size relationship of the various parks, and future parks, including urban parks within the southwest area of the City. He further stated that this was consistent with the General Plan.

Mr. Gamble stated that to qualify for an urban park, the site must contain facilities that relate to a need. Mr. Gamble made the correlation of an urban park similar to that of a community and neighborhood parks that required elements, specific recreation features, etc. An urban park model being proposed includes the categories of "Primary Facilities", "Support Facilities", and "Support Features". This approach addresses recreational needs while still allowing for unique designs at various urban park sites.

Mr. Gamble also identified Plaza de Nacion, the City's newest urban park at the civic center. This park is an example of how the required elements can be sited collectively to create a functional space. This park represents a more passive theme (Primary Facilities) to include 12,000 Square Feet of lawn, and Support Facilities consisting of adjacent shade structures and seating area. Support Features include water features and an informational kiosk.

Mr. Gamble stated that urban parks are only a part of the overall future park system, and that they provide a recreation opportunity within close proximity to residential development within infill development areas.

Commissioner Scott asked if the urban parks were only built in western Chula Vista, who chose the definitions, and asked about the Eastern Urban Core as it relates to urban parks.

Mr. Gamble responded that there is no one definition for an urban park. The definition for an urban park may vary from city to city. Chula Vista's General Plan establishes the basic definition for an urban park. The General Plan describes urban parks as occurring in western Chula Vista where existing land use development patterns create challenges in acquiring land for park purposes.

Commissioner Scott asked about potential urban parks in eastern Chula Vista.

Mr. Gamble responded that within the Otay Ranch project area in eastern Chula Vista an urban character development referred to as the Eastern Urban Center is proposing a series of parks that are of an urban character. City departments are currently reviewing the draft project.

Mr. Martin added in that the Recreation Department is working closely with the Planning Department in the review of the Eastern Urban Center project park and recreation related issues.

Commissioner Searles asked where the term urban park came from.

Mr. Gamble responded that currently there is not precise industry standard. Each municipality has their own definition of urban park. Urban Park is always referred to as an adequate active recreation activity.

MSC (Salcido/Cien-Mayer Vote 6-0-0-1 with Perondi) absent to move Item 9, Public Comments out of order.

Mr. Jan Budington, Jr. introduced himself and provided a brief description of his qualifications, which includes being Safety Director of AYSO. Mr. Budington addressed the Commission regarding Turf alternatives for multi-purpose fields. He stated that not enough watering has become an issue at city parks, and that even though grass is dormant, the roots still require watering. He's received many complaints from both players and referees about dust problems, knee problems, and ankle problems. In addition, he stated that the bare spots in the fields are concerning because they are over hardened, and also cause changes in elevation of the fields. He also stated that better coordination and communication is needed between the City of Chula Vista and the individual members who utilize the park. If better coordination exists between both parties, then fields will be taken care of better. Better coordination includes, watering the fields during the dormant season, which will allow the grass to live during the dormant season, will also cut down on the hardness of the fields, and dust issues.

Commissioner Scott asked if the City reseeds the park?

Mr. Eliason (Parks and Open Space Manager) responded that the City only reseeds during renovation periods, and does not reseed on a yearly basis.

Commissioner Salcido stated that he would like a cost projection on cost of watering Discovery Park through October or mid-November.

Mr. Byers (Director of Public Works Operations) stated that the Department could provide a calculation on cost, and also stated that if there are safety issues on the fields, then he can reduce usage of the fields, or close down the fields if they are deemed unsafe.

Commissioner Scott stated that she would not like to see the fields shut down, and asked that more communication take place between the user groups and the City.

4. Unfinished Business: None
5. New Business: None
6. Written Communications: None
7. Commission Comments:

Commissioner Cien-Mayer asked about the KaBoom Playground installation on February 13, 2007.

Mr. Eliason responded that they had 600 registered volunteers, and one of them was Mr. Buck Martin (Director of Recreation). The playground will be open to the public in about 30-days.

8. Staff Comments -

- a. Mr. Martin (Director of Recreation) reviewed the monthly report to the Commission.
- b. Mr. Byers (Director of Public Works Operations) informed the Commission that Mr. Eliason did a great job organizing the KaBoom Play equipment installation at Eucalyptus Park.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m. to March 15, 2007
Margarita Cellano